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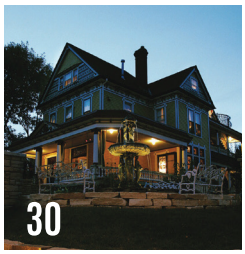
CONTENTS

LAVENDER

ISSUE 634 SEPTEMBER 12-25, 2019



Page 20: Photo by Mike Billitteri, Page 26: Photo by Mike Marcotte, Page 30: Photo courtesy of Rivertown Inn

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Fall Getaways

20 Philadelphia
26 Minnesota Restaurant Patios
30 Rivertown Inn

OUR LAVENDER

8 From the Editor
9 A Word in Edgewise
10 Lavender Lens

OUR SCENE

12 A Day In The Life: Karl Gustafson
14 Arts: Spotlight
34 Travel: Montana

OUR LIVES

38 Bisexual Organizing Project

OUR RESOURCES

40 Community Connection
41 The Network

ON THE COVER
The fall season is prime time to explore greater Minnesota and beyond for vacations and adventuring.
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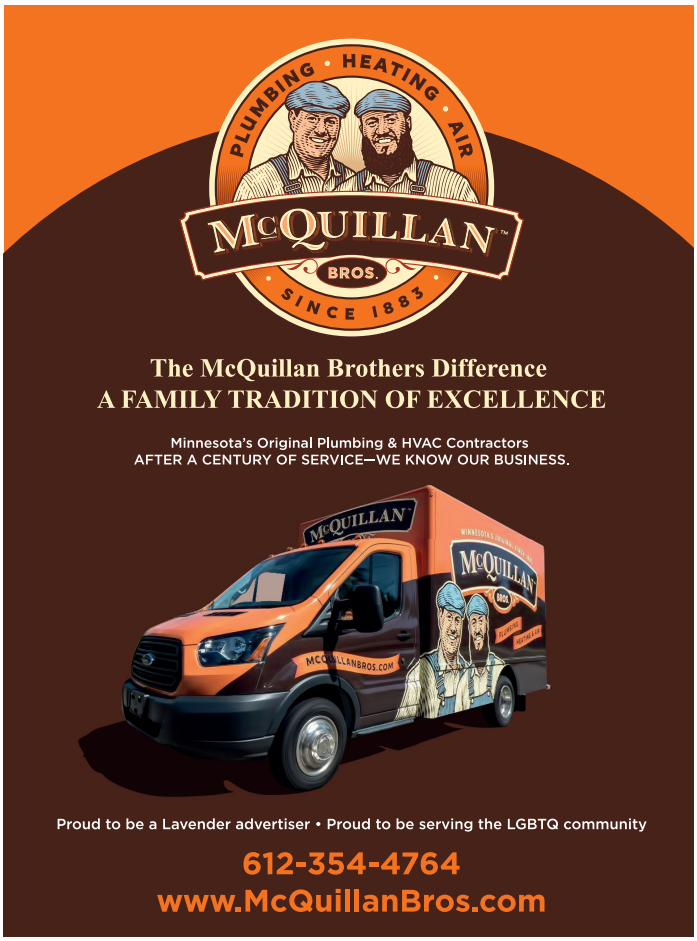
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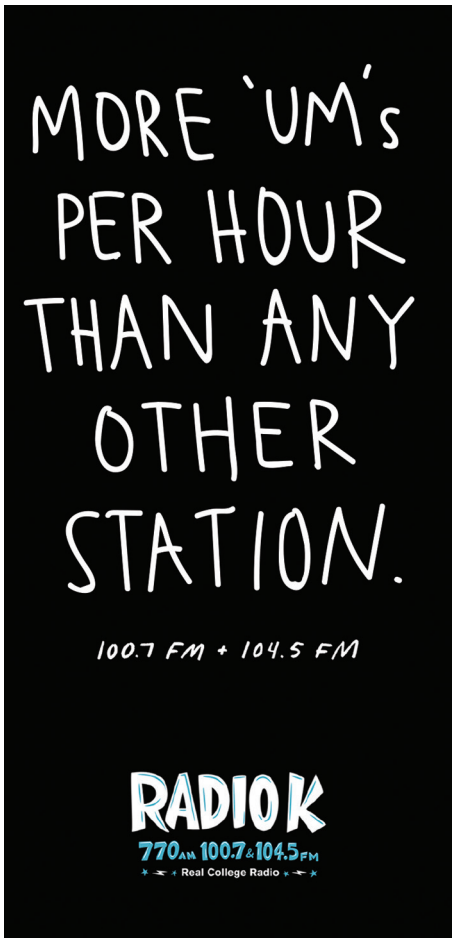
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FROM THE EDITOR | BY CHRIS TARBOX

Fall's Well That Ends Well

Every so often, we all need to get away. We need time off, we need a vacation, we just need a freaking break. Usually, when we think of refreshing and resetting, the first time of year that comes to mind is summer. The weather is warmer, school is out, and it's a great time to get out and go exploring.

Well, I don't know about you, but I greatly prefer the autumn season to summer. Yes, I know, it's a harbinger of the impending winter and all that snow and cold, but be honest with yourself: isn't the fall just... perfect? It's not too cold to enjoy an outdoor excursion, but not too warm to deny yourself the pleasure of a flannel shirt and hot apple cider. The colors outdoors are beautiful, the mosquitos are retreating, Halloween hype is here, and I am all sorts of ready for it.

So when we think of taking a vacation or day trip, why not consider the fall as a prime contender for doing some adventuring? With Lavender's 2019 Fall Getaways issue, we explore several options to satiate your autumn travel cravings. Yours truly explores the GLBT history and culture of Philadelphia; Mike Marcotte offers up five restaurant and brewery patios to check out in Minnesota; we learn about the luxurious Rivertown Inn of Stillwater; and Carla Waldemar checks out the Paws Up Ranch in beautiful Montana.

On top of that, we look at a Day in the Life of one Karl Gustafson, and we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Bisexual Organizing Project! So as fall kicks into full gear, don't fret! Treat yourself to that autumnal adventure that you so greatly deserve!

Editor's Note: The dates for the Fall Parade of Homes listed in the Aug. 29 issue are Sept. 7-29, not Sept. 9-27. Lavender regrets this error. ∎

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A WORD IN EDGEWISE | BY E.B. BOATNER

Theater Stars Align

A recent theatrical syzygy aligned Guthrie's *Floyd's* and Jungle Theater's *Stinkers*. One might occasionally find two simultaneous *Hamlets*, but rarely two productions concerning the recently incarcerated.

Both were world premieres, both commissioned; double-Pulitzered Lynn Nottage's *Floyd's* through the Guthrie, *Stinkers* a request from local legend Sally Wingert that playwright Josh Tobiessen write a vehicle in which she might star.

Floyd's, like Nottage's 2015 Sweat, takes place in Reading, PA, in a truck-stop sandwich shop Purgatory. Flames spurting from below, Floyd taunts, "I'm the only one who'll hire you!" "You" are chef Montrellous, mentor-counterpoint to Floyd, and three line-cooks; trust-wary Letitia who stands up lovelorn, devastated Rafael, newbie Jason, savaged by Floyd, hazed by the others. They become entranced by Montrellous's ambrosial concoctions, aching to attain their own gustatory Nirvana.

More pastoral is the setting of *Stinkers*, lakeside cottage of stay-at-home dad, Brad, toddlers Evie and Oscar (pint-sized puppets with handlers). Neer-do-well pal Calvin, enters, they talk amid kid chaos (pee, poop, diaper changes). Knocks at the door reveal Brad's mom Joyce/grandma Mimi (Wingert), released after incarceration for tax hanky-panky, and brooding co-detainee Lilith.

Like Floyd, Joyce enters in a whirlwind, enmeshing Brad in a scheme to make wooden toy trucks she'll sell at fairs, urging Calvin to go for his dream, buy his coveted red truck now and pay later. "*Now*!"

Mindfulness is important. Nottage notes in an interview, "Making a sandwich can be an exercise in mindfulness–particularly if you create it with intention." *Stinkers* Dad practices mindfulness continually. To Oscar's tantrum-thrown cookie he negotiates, "Pick it up and I will give you a fresh one." "No!" Brad persists, chipping away the three-year-old's will until the pastry is retrieved. Even after learning Joyce used his home to stash her loot and his bank account as her launderette, Brad remains Dad. "You're having a bad day," he consoles Oscar, and, ad infinitum, "I'll love you even if you don't love me."

In various manifestations, *Floyd's* and *Stinkers* characters display courage. The everyday striving for salvation in a sandwich or for a love you've never experienced; courage in answering the need for a diaper change while faced with losing everything because of Mom's larceny. Even the Boss from Hell keeps Floyd's open and running, manifesting produce from unnamed sources, and single mom Joyce scrimped to buy the home in which Brad and grandkids live. She did time, she reveals, to protect her equally larcenous, money-skimming co-workers who chipped in with the "laundry" that before incarceration she hid in… well, way too close to home.

Brad's first inkling of trouble is a bank call about recent large deposits. Outraged that his toys are not the source of wealth, and also grief-stricken: "I thought I'd found something I was good at." It gets worse. Joyce finds her 7-figure nest egg has disappeared in the bed of Calvin's new truck. "Are you having a bad day?" Evie lisps. "Mimi, sing us a song!" Mimi demurs, relents. "This is one I sang for your daddy when he was little, but he won't remember." "Hush little baby don't say a word," she begins. And Brad joins in.

Finally, the four flee Floyd's. On the threshold, Jason eyes Floyd; "You're mean," he murmurs. "Mean." They decamp, fleeing outward, while *Stinkers* members snug inward to home and hearth. A wickedly contrived ending to *Stinkers* allows dust and swag to settle on the deserving. Lilith and Calvin have a fresh start. And Floyd of the flames? Allegories are what they are. She'll tyrannize a new batch of recently released line cooks, who'll sling mayonnaise, slice white bread and cheese, dreaming of their perfect sandwich.

Following a *Stinkers* matinee, we went to All Square, "a criminal justice social enterprise" in South Minneapolis that really knows its grilled cheese. Ladies at the next table had *Floyd's* programs. The plays' runs have ended, but the folks at All Square continue to serve. allsquarempls.com ∎

LAVENDER LENS | PHOTOS BY RANDY STERN

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A DAY in the Life

KARL GUSTAFSON

By Chris Tarbox

Photo by Josie Bergmann

Name: Karl Gustafson

Where did you grow up? Fort Lauderdale, Florida and Eagan, Minnesota

Where do you live? Highland Park, St. Paul

Who do you live with? The love of my life, my husband of five years, Gregg

What is your occupation? I currently work full-time as a Sales Coworker at IKEA Twin Cities. This is the job that officially pays my bills. The job I'm most passionate about—and the one I could see myself pursuing for many years to come—is my part-time work as a tour guide at the James J. Hill House in St. Paul. (Come on one of my tours! They're a blast!)

When did you come out? My senior year of college, in 2012

How'd that go? Interesting, to say the least. Individual reactions have varied, but most people have been positive and supportive. My greatest sense of validation came the other month at a cousin's wedding when, having finished dancing with my husband, the mother of a young boy came up to Gregg and myself and asked if we were married. Her son, she said was in love with his best friend and had seen us dancing together. It was such a great moment to reflect on how far we've come as a society and how people love people more than they love their beliefs. We can change hearts and minds just by being true to who we are. If we love ourselves, then the rest of the world is sure to follow!

When do you wake up? As late as possible, but usually around 9 or 10 a.m.

Phone alarm or old school alarm? Phone alarm (do people really still use old school alarms?!?)

What's the first thing you do in the morning? Eat breakfast in bed and cuddle with my husband

Breakfast? A chocolate chip Clif Bar

Coffee? Only if it's iced or there's nothing better on offer!

Cream or no? Whipped cream all the way!

How do you spend your commute? Lip syncing for my life! I'm convinced (in my own head, at least) that I'm the next *RuPaul's Drag Race* superstar! Favorite tunes to belt include: "F*** U Betta" by Neon Hitch, "Listen" by Beyoncé, "Sorry Not Sorry" by Demi Lovato, and "You Don't Own Me" by Grace.

If your job were like a yearbook, what would you be voted? (Class clown, best dressed, most annoying, etc.): Social Butterfly

What inspires you? Just about everything. In particular, though, I enjoy reveling in the beauty of nature, art, and music and in quality conversations with good friends and family.

Do you eat your lunch while working or take a break? At work, I always take a break for lunch. At home, it really depends on what's occupying me at the time and how devoted I am to finishing my task (housework, you'll just have to wait)!

Is your work space tidy or a hot mess? At work, it's immaculate. At home… well, that's another story!

What's been your favorite job? I love the work I do as an Interpreter at the James J. Hill House in St. Paul. Built in 1891, the house itself is 36,000 square feet, making it the largest private residence in the state of Minnesota. But it's also one of the most modern for its time, with a state of the art security system, hardwired electricity, 16 gas fireplaces, and hot and cold running water (in an era when many houses had none!). Not only that, but the house allows me to explore many issues of the Victorian/Edwardian eras that we're still dealing with today: gender (in)equality, (un)equal pay for men and women, racism, and classism, just to name a few.

Who are your heroes? My husband, Gregg. He has two Master's degrees and has met some of the world's foremost performers: Rosemary Clooney, Carol Channing, Yo-Yo Ma, Rudolf Nureyev, Bernadette Peters, and Neal Sedaka, just to name a few, in his work as an arts administrator. He's an absolute genius, and I love him to death. Other heroes include strong female figures like Princess Diana and Michelle Obama and Gilded Age architects Horace Trumbauer and Richard Morris Hunt. (Just Google some of their houses! They are absolutely stunning!)

Favorite weeknight meal: Go out, take out, or cook in? All three, actually. It really depends on the day and what kind of a mood I'm in. My husband is a wonderful cook, so I love to eat whatever he's prepared for the day!

Most embarrassing moment: Getting stuck in a plastic Ronald McDonald statue at 5-years-old. Let's just say I was buns-up between his legs and there were suggestions of greasing me up to free me from his nether regions. Ultimately, some firefighters were able to free me by unscrewing Ronald McDonald from the floor. But my adventure served as a cautionary tale for all future McDonald's. Thanks to me (or at least I think it's thanks to me), all Ronald McDonald statues now have plastic between their legs to keep other young adventurers such as myself away from Ronald's jewels! So much for a Happy Meal!

On a usual weeknight, you are doing what? Working at IKEA or relaxing at home.

Bedtime: As late as possible, but usually around 10 or 11. Very rarely will I stay up past 2 or 3, but it has been known to happen!

Favorite weekend activity: Partying with friends, especially at the Gay 90's Ladies of La Femme drag show! Those ladies are fabulous!

What are you most proud of and why? My marriage. I know it sounds corny, but I witnessed many unhappy marriages growing up and thought mine would be the same. Fortunately, I found a man who not only appreciates me for exactly who I am but who also challenges me to be my best, most authentic self. Most importantly, we love being together and can't get enough of each other's company. Marriage is bliss with Gregg, and I wouldn't have it any other way!

Words of wisdom to share: "If you can't love yourself, then how in the hell are you ever gonna love somebody else? Can I get an amen!"- RuPaul ∎

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Theater Latte Da, renowned for its musical productions, is reviving the Bob Fosse classic about women in the Windy City living in the midst of a culture of crime in the 1920s. Choreographer Kelli Foster Warder shares, "I am a huge fan of Bob Fosse. His style, subtlety, and storytelling are always an inspiration for me as a choreographer. In approaching *Chicago*, I hope to honor the beauty of the iconic choreography people expect from this show, highlight the talent of our amazing cast, and bring a different picture that emphasizes the story of our world, the glam and the spectacle amidst the grit and grime."

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

Sept. 14-Oct. 27
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www.guthrietheater.org

In 1944, one of the most enduring plays of American theater premiered in Chicago. At that point, gay master playwright Tennessee Williams was not well known, though by the decade's end he would be full speed ahead en route to legendary status.

The Glass Menagerie. Photo courtesy of the Guthrie Theater

The Glass Menagerie, often referred to as "a memory play", is a not-so-veiled effort at autobiography. Protagonist Tom is the playwright himself, supremely frustrated in a dead end warehouse job and that he is expected to support his domineering mother and physically disabled sister indefinitely. There are no homoerotic or unrequited homoromantic moments, which has triggered some activists to claim he wasn't being honest. However, Williams was extraordinarily out when very, very few others were. Moreover, the idea that one should only write about their sexuality if one is gay is tyrannically reductive. He later wrote very openly about his sexuality and experiences, and homosexuality reverberates through much of his work dating back to the 1940s. .

At the Guthrie Theater, it seems as if it's a rite of passage for artistic directors to either direct *The Glass Menagerie* themselves or see to it that someone else does so on their watch. AD Joe Dowling directed it in 2007 with *Queer as Folk's* Randy Harrison as Tom. In the 1988-89 season, when Garland Wright was AD, Vivian Matalon directed it. In 1979, during Alvin Epstein's tenure, Emily Mann directed Jeffrey Alan Chandler and Barbara Bryne in a breathtaking production.

Now AD Joseph Haj directs. He will bring an apprehension of the Southern Gothic sensibility inherent in Williams as he directed for several years in North Carolina. His staging is eagerly awaited.

Continued on page 16

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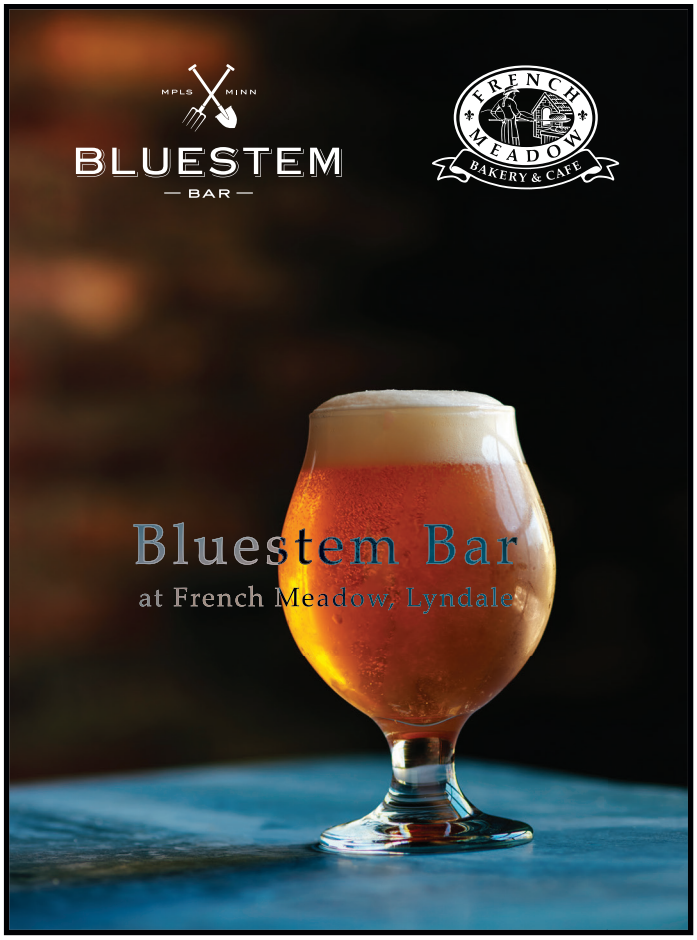

SPOTLIGHT BY JOHN TOWNSEND

Jimmy and Lorraine. Photo courtesy of Granger

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www.trylon.org

Jules Dassin (1911-2008), one of *film noir's* most compelling visionaries, understood how tenuous security was in a society where wealth is hard won and hard to hang on to. This condition makes ruthlessness a vice that evildoers cultivate. The naive, the innocent, and the gullible are often unwittingly at the mercy of the diabolical in Dassin. The few who skirt that are the pragmatic and occasionally the exceptionally savvy who happen to be guided by virtue.

Per the Trylon series title, the standard justification for being blacklisted in mid-20th century Hollywood was for having been a card-carrying Communist: in some cases, the government was terribly irrational in their pursuit of that. Dassin's departure from the Communist Party came soon after the dissolving of the neutrality pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in 1939 (The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact). Dassin's timing was certainly open to interpretation by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) led by Joseph McCarthy.

However, the filmmaker's deep concern for postwar society clearly came from a place of anguished love for his country. *The Naked City's* opening aerial shots of the Manhattan skyline followed by shots of an abandoned Wall Street at night and a neon-charged Times Square are enthralling segments from what won William Daniels the 1948 cinematography Oscar. Ironically, in the midst of this urban majesty, a fashion model is murdered by two thugs and a riveting police investigation ensues. Dassin beseeches us to remember that in this concrete jungle of eight million people, one young woman's death matters.

In *Thieves Highway* (1949), a film packed with vivid performances, we go far west to rural California where Nick (Richard Conte), a war veteran trucker, seeks righteous

Continued on page 18

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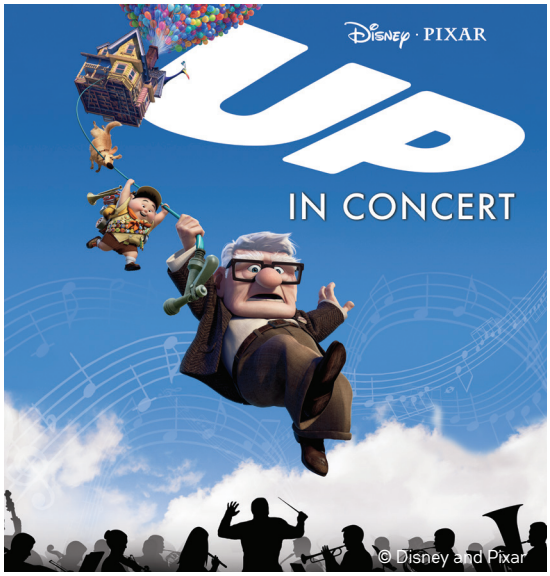

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PHOTOS Hicks: Travis Anderson Photo. The Empire Strikes Back: © 2019 & TM LUCASFILM LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © DISNEY. UP: Presentation licensed by Disney Concerts. © All rights reserved. It's a Wonderful Life brought to you by CineConcerts. All prices and concerts subject to change.

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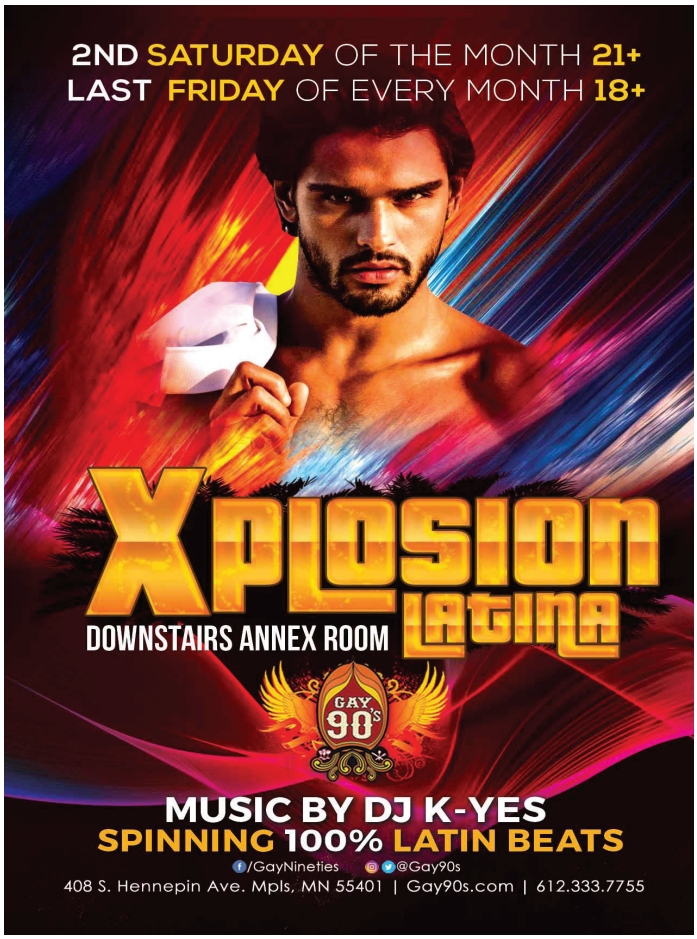

vengeance upon a mobster trucker who critically injured his immigrant father. Nick is also is faced with insincerity in love—not just from the women in his life, but within himself. The legendary Valentina Cortese as a streetwalker and bombshell Barbara Lawrence as the wifely middle-class ideal create one of noir's most thought-provoking triangles.

In *Night and the City* we cross the pond to enter an unusually dark vision of the London. No regal crumpets and corgis here – it's an underworld where boxing, betrayal, and desperate measures, catastrophically timed, make for powerful *film noir* quite different than what American audiences had been exposed to in 1950. Richard Widmark gives a memorable performance as a brazenly audacious American con man who makes choices that may well make you cringe. All three of films indelibly underscore the gnawing uncertainty of American and British culture in the postwar era.

JIMMY AND LORRAINE: A MUSING

Sept. 20 – Oct. 20
Pillsbury House Theatre, 3501 Chicago Ave. S., Minneapolis
612-825-0459
www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org

Talvin Wilks's play about two queer African-American paragons received raves for its Hartford premiere. The central figures are Lorraine Hansberry, playwright of *Raisin in the Sun*, and James Baldwin, author of *Giovanni's Room*. Director Brian Jennings, who directed the original commission for HartBeat Ensemble, also has staged it for Pillsbury House. He says that in regard to style: "The piece is an imagining of the very real friendship between James Baldwin and Lorraine Hansberry. As such, it lives in a space between the real and the poetic—and often switches back and forth between the two. We use the expressionistic devices of a memory play—and the very hard and fact based devices of verbatim/docudrama. There are elements of minstrelsy and elements of absurdism. It all somehow weaves together into a complete fabric of an event."

As for content, Jennings shares: "At its heart, the play is about struggle. The struggle of two outsiders, queer, black trying to carve out space for themselves in an America that is struggling to define itself. It's about trying to break through the isolation—self-imposed or societal—to find a companion, a brother/sister-in-arms, someone who will have your back as you storm the barricades."

RIDE THE CYCLONE

Through Oct. 20
Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Ave. S. Minneapolis
612-822-7063
www.jungletheatre.org

How's this for a wild idea for a musical? A mechanical fortune-teller communicates with choir members who have died on a roller-coaster. The Jacob Richmond-Brooke Maxwell sensation earned acclaim in Toronto, Chicago, and Off-Broadway. Kevin McCollum, who co-produced *Rent* became the President of St. Paul's Ordway Center in the 1990s, went on to produce more on Broadway and in London. He developed *Ride the Cyclone* here in the U.S. and is advising on the Jungle production.

Jungle artistic director Sarah Rasmussen shares: "It means alot to earn the trust of a respected and successful Broadway producer. I've been obsessed with this musical for a few years, and we are thrilled to create a Jungle production of *Ride the Cyclone* and bring it to Twin Cities audiences." Jim Lichtscheidl, who plays the fortune-teller, has also choreographed. Mark Christine conducts the four-piece band. ∎

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IT'S ALWAYS FABULOUS IN *PHILADELPHIA*

BY CHRIS TARBOX
Photos by Mike Billitteri

Explore the history and delights of Philadelphia, which boasts a vibrant GLBT community all its own.

I'll admit that when I was a kid, any vacation that involved constant history lessons instead of constant theme park frolicking was no vacation for me. I was far more interested in beach days, rollercoasters, and pushing my folks to buy me frivolous crap from theme park gift shops than, you know, *learning something.*

Philadelphia boasts a vibrant GLBT community and embraces its gay history.

Luckily, I grew up a tad since then, and as an adult, I make sure to indulge in some measure of historical sightseeing in my vacations. When my friend and I decided to take a trip to beautiful Philadelphia, PA, we knew we had our work cut out for us in terms of discovering archival wonders relating to both the city itself and our great country at large.

Let me tell you, we discovered them and then some: with Philly being the birthplace of America and all, we encountered a treasure trove of historical gems, but one thing that deserves notice is the fact that the City of Brotherly Love is host to a vibrant hotbed of GLBT culture and history.

"Philadelphia has a very rich, strong community and presence," said Arturo Varela of Visit Philadelphia. "Our Gayborhood is [a] pretty central location, which is also an area not only of gay bars, but also just amazing restaurants and shops."

What is the Gayborhood, you ask? A Center City gay village located in the Washington Square West neighborhood, the Gayborhood is a hub of many GLBT-owned and GLBT-friendly businesses, bars and locals in downtown Philly, with street signs and crosswalks adorned with rainbow colors, inviting queer tourists to enjoy Philly's rainbow nightlife in style.

Continued on page 22

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The Gayborhood is a gay village located in downtown Philly's Washington Square West neighborhood.

For the artistically inclined, consider a trip to Philadelphia's Magic Gardens, a nonprofit mosaic wonderland.

Expect a heapin' helping of rainbows in Philly's Gayborhood.

"We have a really rich LGBTQ history," said Varela. "I say one of the best examples of that history [were the] demonstrations for LGBTQ rights that took place every Fourth of July from 1965 to 1969 outside of Independence Hall. Those demonstrations are known collectively as the Annual Reminders. Walking around the city, you'll see many historic markers everywhere, and you'll see that many of them are marking an event that was significant to our community."

There are plenty of bars and nightclubs for GLBT visitors to choose from, from Woody's and U Bar to The Bike Stop and Voyeur. There's also no shortage of parties to attend here.

"We have a really, really strong drag culture here in Philadelphia," said Varela. "One [example] would be Bob and Barbara's Lounge on South Street. Every Thursday, they have this amazing attraction," which would be the longest-running drag show in Philly.

Philadelphia is also home to the William Way LGBT Community Center, a nonprofit offering counseling and social services to the local queer community, as well as boasting extensive historical records and artifacts relating to gay Philly history.

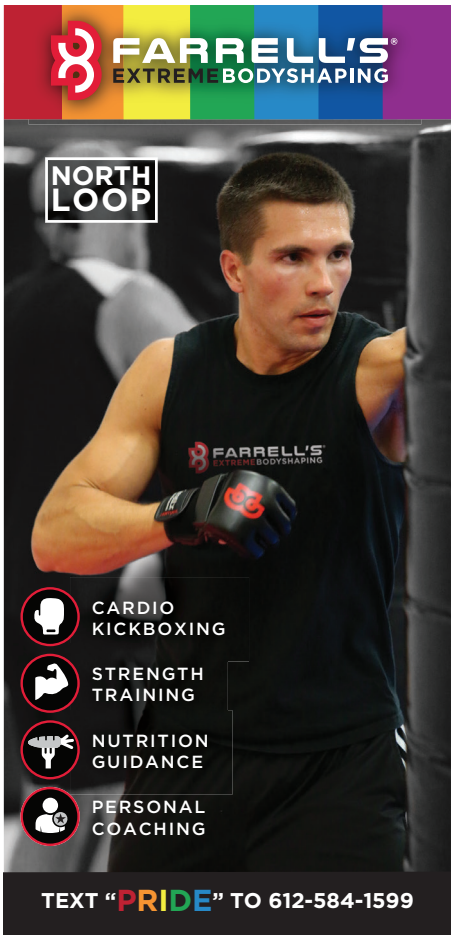
Of course, history is a natural resource for Philadelphia, and I'd be remiss to not mention must-see American history lessons courtesy of Independence Hall, the adoption place of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution; the relatively new Museum of the American Revolution, a brilliantly comprehensive chronicle of American Patriots' fight for liberty from the British; or my personal favorite, the National Constitution Center, an interactive museum that offers the best lesson in civics outside of an actual civics classroom.

Head to the west end of Benjamin Franklin Parkway to do your best boxing pose next to the iconic Rocky statue before running up the steps and exploring the visual wonders of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, home to hundreds of thousands of paintings, sculptures, and relics that would take weeks to fully take in and appreciate. Absorb the stunning Second Empire architecture of Philadelphia City Hall before heading up to the 57th floor of One Liberty Place to view the Athens of America in all its panoramic glory.

And lest we forget, there's the food. OH, THE FOOD. The cuisine of Philadelphia is almost as legendary as the historical landmarks, and it's a reputation well-deserved. You'll have a LOT to choose from, whether it's baked goods and meats from the Italian Market in South Philly to classy American fare at restaurants such as The Love and Mac's Tavern. Then there's the crown jewel of Philly food: the cheesesteak.

Opinions vary wildly, especially among Philly residents, but my friend and I decided to wade into the ultimate South Philly debate: who has the better cheesesteak—Pat's, or Geno's? After our careful and very scientific exploration of both restaurants' steaks, we decided that Pat's was the true King of South Philly

Continued on page 24



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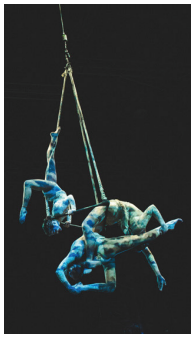

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Philadelphia City Hall is a marvel of Second Empire-style architecture.

when it comes to this meaty, cheesy work of culinary genius. That's just us, though! When in Philly, take advantage of every cheesesteak opportunity you get!

While Philadelphia is a fine place to visit year-round, fall is an especially fine time to stop by, says Varela.

"One of my favorite months of the year in Philadelphia is September," said Varela. "September is special because we have two really big festivals including the Fringe Festival. It has literally hundreds of shows, including shows organized by local organizations and artists. And then the other festival that takes place is the Opera Festival."

Another major event occurring in Philly during the fall months is the annual OutFest, a GLBT Pride event associated with National Coming Out Day (NCOD) in mid-October. In fact, it's the largest NCOD event in the world!

"It's actually my favorite gay event of the year," said Varela. "OutFest is this amazing celebration and block party that we have for National Coming Out Day in October. And it's a really fun one. They have different stages with entertainment and drag shows, and they have DJs."

OutFest will be taking place on Oct. 13 this year in the Gayborhood, with over 150 vendor booths, live music, activity zones, dance parties and more.

Philadelphia is home to a number of legendary GLBT bars and nightclubs, such as Woody's.

Simply put, whether you want to enjoy the amazing GLBT culture of Philadelphia or soak in all the American history you can muster, you're guaranteed a trip you'll never forget.

Also, cheesesteaks.

For more information on the City of Brotherly Love and the multitudinous joys to discover within, visit www.visitphilly.com. ▮

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THE BEST RESTAURANT, BREWERY & WINERY PATIOS IN MINNESOTA

BY MIKE MARCOTTE
Photos by Mike Marcotte

Even though Labor Day has passed, it doesn't mean that patio season is over. As a producer for KSTP-TV's *Twin Cities Live*, I have a monthly segment called "Worth the Trip". I tally votes on Facebook as to what spots around Minnesota are worth visiting.

Earlier this summer, I asked for the best restaurant, brewery and winery patios and visited the top five. I met owners, chatted with customers, and learned why these places should be on your radar this fall.

PEARL LAKE LODGE

10600 County Hwy. 8, Marty, MN (Kimball)
www.pearllakelodge.com

With a population of 20 people, Marty is about one hour northwest of the Twin Cities, near the city of Kimball. Marty is home to a church, a school, a town ball field, and the reason for my visit, Pearl Lake Lodge.

Pearl Lake Lodge originally opened in the 1920s. The back patio was finished in 2018.

Owner Tom "Rudy" Ruether showed me around, by first introducing me to what he calls the "wow door". He calls it the "wow door" because once you walk through it and go out on the patio, all you will want to say is 'wow'.

Rudy's eclectic personality is visible through the wide array of items you will find on the patio. There is an Elvis statue, a British telephone booth, and a stoplight that's upside down. Rudy tells me that all of his great ideas are stolen from other places.

The patio in the back of Pearl Lake Lodge seats 180 people. The restaurant also has a patio out front which fits another 50.

The patio has a music stage with tunes every Sunday, along with Wednesdays and most Saturdays.

Pearl Lake Lodge hosts one heck of a St. Patrick's Day celebration. The town of 20 swells to 8,000 people with a parade boasting 110 floats and 1,000 participants. It takes about two-and-a-half hours to complete. Rudy calls it "the parade so nice you'll see it twice" because the parade loops around the tiny town of Marty.

I fell in love with Pearl Lake Lodge's "buy a friend a drink" board. Above the bar, you will see a whiteboard. You can buy someone a drink or food, and their name, along with what you purchased them, will show up on the board. Then when they stop by, they'll see how you paid it forward.

Moscow On The Hill has over 300 vodkas on their menu, including 19 which are infused in-house.

ROUND LAKE VINEYARDS

30124 MN 264, Round Lake, MN
www.roundlakevineyards.com

Round Lake Vineyards is more than three hours southwest of the Twin Cities. It's a perfect stop if you're planning a weekend getaway to Sioux Falls, South Dakota or Okoboji, Iowa. There's a surprisingly high number of bed and breakfasts around Round Lake if you're looking for a peaceful getaway.

If Round Lake sounds familiar, chances are you have seen their wines on liquor store shelves. Their wines are sold at over 300 locations around the Midwest. They started planting grapes in 2007 and began producing wines in 2012.

Their patio is worth the trip. On a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, it will have 150 to 200 people. They host live music on Sundays.

There are trees, a waterfall, and when you look up, you will get a view of Round Lake as the winery is located right on the shore.

What sets Round Lake Winery apart is that they have a chef on the property. Chef Brendan previously worked for Hilton Hotels and wanted a change of pace, so he decided to work at Round Lake. The food matches the quality of the wine.

Round Lake has five red wines and eight white wines. The most popular red is the Gander, a blend of Marquette, Merlot and Cabernet. Of the white wines, the most popular is the Brianna. I highly recommend it.

Even in the winter, Round Lake is open five days a week.

Continued on page 28

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GRANDVIEW VALLEY WINERY

42703 Grandview Ave., Belview, MN
gvwinery.com

The city of Belview is about two-and-a-half hours west of Minneapolis between Montevideo and Redwood Falls, making it an achievable day trip from the Twin Cities.

In Belview, you will find Grandview Valley Winery, which opened in 2012. The winery, which at one point boasted more than 4,200 vines, sits on what once was a soybean field.

The patio, which seats about 100 people, is worth the drive. They feature live music about once a month, and you are able to order their made-from-scratch pizzas, which can be tailored to accommodate gluten-free diets.

When the harvest allows, Grandview Valley Winery's nine wines are made from 100 percent Minnesota-grown grapes, with the exception of the Cabernet Sauvignon.

The spring of 2019 was tough for Grandview Valley Winery. The severe weather caused nearly every vine to die at the ground. However, the Winery is still operating.

They are open Thursdays through Sundays year-round. Make sure you have cash or a checkbook before you go; they do not take credit cards.

About 2.5 hours from the Twin Cities, Grandview Valley Winery offers vino, made-from-scratch pizza, and live music.

MOSCOW ON THE HILL

371 Selby Ave., Saint Paul, MN
moscowonthehill.com

If you're looking to enjoy a patio a bit closer to the Twin Cities, head to Moscow On the Hill in the Cathedral Hill neighborhood of Saint Paul. It's home to one of the most hidden restaurant patios in Minnesota.

Surly has good beer, and their food is just as tasty, including this sandwich, which is a take on the McRib.

The now-Russian restaurant originally opened in 1994 as a French restaurant. They switched from French cuisine to Russian food a couple years later.

The patio cannot be seen from the street, and the buildings surrounding it block the street noise you get in the city.

The founder's son, Eugene, tells me that if you want to avoid a wait for a table on the patio, you should stop by for lunch, which they serve seven days a week.

Moscow On The Hill is known for their 300-plus selections of vodka, including 19 that are infused in-house. Of the ones they make, Horseradish Vodka is the most popular. It goes great in a Bloody Mary. They serve a flight with six flavors of vodka for $20. Moscow On the Hill partners with 45th Parallel Distillery to sell their infused vodkas at liquor stores.

As for food, Eugene says you need to order the handmade dumplings: in particular, the Siberian Pelmeni, which are filled with beef and pork.

For the more adventurous eater, order the Yazik, which is beef tongue.

I was impressed with the vast number of gluten-free menu items available, which are clearly marked.

The patio at Round Lake Winery in southwestern Minnesota is one of the best in the state.

SURLY BREWING CO.

520 Malcolm Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN
surlybrewing.com

Surly Brewing Co. got its start in 2006 in Brooklyn Center. They added their Minneapolis facility in 2014 and produce beer at both spots.

The patio at the Minneapolis location fits 900 people. About 100 seats underneath an awning, closest to the restaurant, are full-service. Elsewhere, you are able to order food from Surly's "Food Island", a tent where you can order a vast majority of their menu. You will receive a text message when your food is ready.

And Surly's food is far beyond average. Their Hog Frites are French fries topped with meat and veggies. They're incredibly good. The Brussels sprouts, the smoked meats tray, and the key lime pie are good choices. Oh, the burger is tasty as well.

Surly's second floor is home to a pizza pub. You are able to get pizza to go and bring that outside to the patio.

The patio (or beer garden) is dog-friendly, too. It does get busy, so Surly staff tell me that the best times to visit are between 11-11:30 a.m. and around 2 p.m. any day of the week if you want to avoid waiting. ▮

Mike Marcotte can be seen on KSTP-TV's Twin Cities Live. You can read more of his Minnesota guides on his website, www.givemethemike.com.

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Rivertown Inn boasts an amazing selection of specialty suites, such as the Longfellow Suite. Photo courtesy of Rivertown Inn

LIVE LIKE ROYALTY AT *RIVERTOWN INN*

BY KASSIDY TARALA

Stillwater's Rivertown Inn has unique, elegant touches to make every guest's stay feel personal and quaint.

Since opening in 1982 as a bed and breakfast, the Rivertown Inn, located in Stillwater, Minnesota, has served many roles: a private home, apartments, and a youth crisis center. Today, the historic 1884 property serves as one of Stillwater's most unique inns.

Purchased by Jeff and Julie Anderson in 1989, the Rivertown Inn is known as a destination for travelers looking to view Stillwater's magnificent autumn colors, folks interested in antiquing down, and even couples looking to tie the knot. The inn's eclectic, elegant, and comfortable style makes it a hot spot for guests who want a personalized, boutique hotel stay.

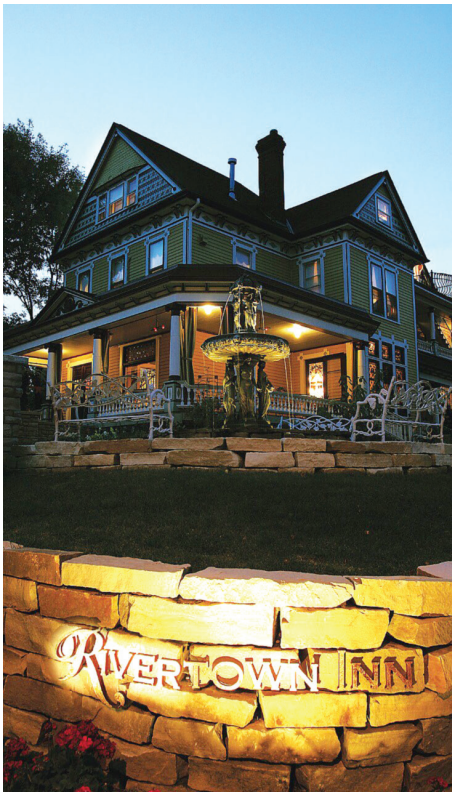
The Rivertown Inn has seven individual suites and two bedchambers, each with a unique literary-inspired décor featuring elegant furnishings and antiques. The Agatha Christie Grand Suite is perfect for any murder mystery-loving couple.

While the property alone is enough to leave guests speechless, the Rivertown Inn takes it one step further with its amenities. From its wide range of gastronomic offerings to its in-room spa amenities, Rivertown Inn knows how to spoil its guests.

"Each evening our guests enjoy a social hour with wine and appetizers. In the morning, there is a three-course, chef-prepared breakfast. We have two professional chefs on staff," says Larry Loyer, general manager of Rivertown Inn. "All of our rooms have at least one fireplace. Most of the rooms have two-person jetted tubs, some have showers with steam, and some have both a tub as well as a shower. Three of our rooms include outdoor patios."

If that isn't enough to make you unpack your bags and dramatically yell, "Honey, I'm home!" down the elegant hallway, I don't know what will.

Though the Rivertown Inn makes for a romantic weekend getaway with a significant other (or just yourself… you deserve it), the inn is equipped to host all sorts of events, from corporate meetings to fairytale weddings.



The Rivertown Inn has been in business in Stillwater since 1982. Photo courtesy of Rivertown Inn

Continued on page 32

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"We host corporate retreats, weddings, private dinners, birthday parties, fundraisers, cooking classes—almost any event you can think of," Loyer says.

For those who are native to Stillwater but still want to partake in the elegance that is the Rivertown Inn, events and classes are a great opportunity to check out the historic property and pick up some skills while doing it. With two professional chefs on-site, the Rivertown Inn offers monthly culinary classes. Each three-hour session allows guests to learn how to prepare certain dishes while also sampling food and wine pairings.

Private dining is also available for those looking to go above and beyond for an anniversary, birthday, or a "just because" night. With two main dining rooms, the Rivertown Inn offers multiple options for intimate dining with loved ones, family, and friends. Also, the Rivertown Inn offers a variety of packages, including a romance package, a portrait package, and a seasonal outdoor adventure package with kayaking, biking, and winter snowshoeing.

Though the Rivertown Inn is proven to be a premier destination in Stillwater year-round, Loyer says the autumn months are the most popular.

"Stillwater has been rated as the top destination for fall colors in the entire United States. Can you believe we beat out all of the locations in the Northeast? Also, Stillwater has become a great foodie town," he says.

Among the Rivertown Inn's clientele are several GLBT community members. Despite the inn's staff being so small, Loyer says some of them also identify within the GLBT community.

"The GLBTQ community I would estimate is at about five percent of our clientele," he says. "Most of them come from Minneapolis. Of the ten staff members, two are part of the GLBTQ community."

If you're interested in visiting the Rivertown Inn, be sure to book in advance—especially if you're planning on visiting during the autumn months.

For more information, visit www.rivertown-inn.com. ▮

Even the bathrooms are simply luxurious, as seen here for the Oscar Wilde suite. Photo courtesy of Rivertown Inn

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TRAVEL | BY CARLA WALDEMAR | PHOTOS BY CARLA WALDEMAR

The Island Lodge rests on the edge of Salmon Lake.

Hey Dude: Ranch it at Paws Up

Oh, now I get it: As the driver speeds me to the glam ranch called Paws Up—37,000 acres of Montana wonderland—I see why they call it "Big Sky." You know you're not in Minnesota, Dorothy, when the whole world seems clasped beneath a vast blue dome. At Paws Up, Nature (out here, it deserves a capital N) is boss—the CEO of endless untamed beauty. As Chad, a hired hand, put it to me: "Every morning when you wake up, the mountains give you a hug."

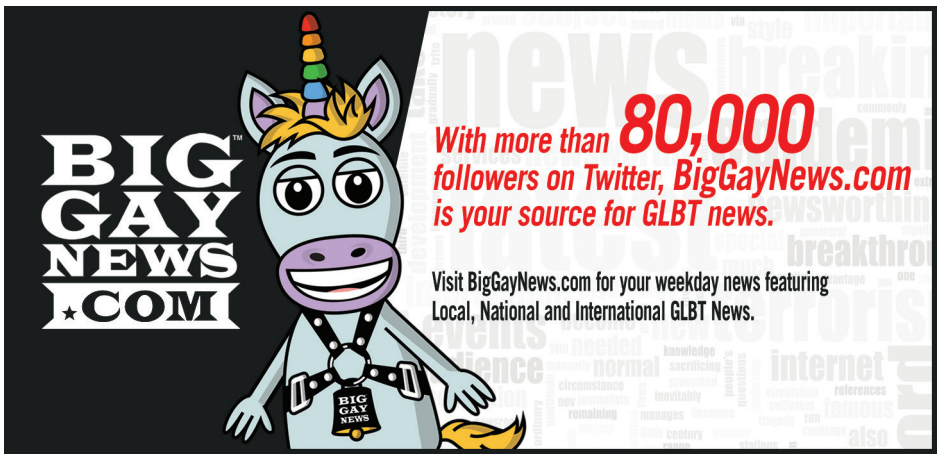
We wake up, that first morning, under a canvas ceiling in a tent as big as my condo, complete with carpets, heater, AC, and an amenities-rich bathroom—even a claw-footed tub. Hammocks await, too. Paws Up originated this glamping style in the U.S., Managing Director Steve Hurst tells us as we gather for dinner around the vast, stone fireplace of the dining tent that serves our cluster. The Blackfoot River gallivants along, just outside the canvas.

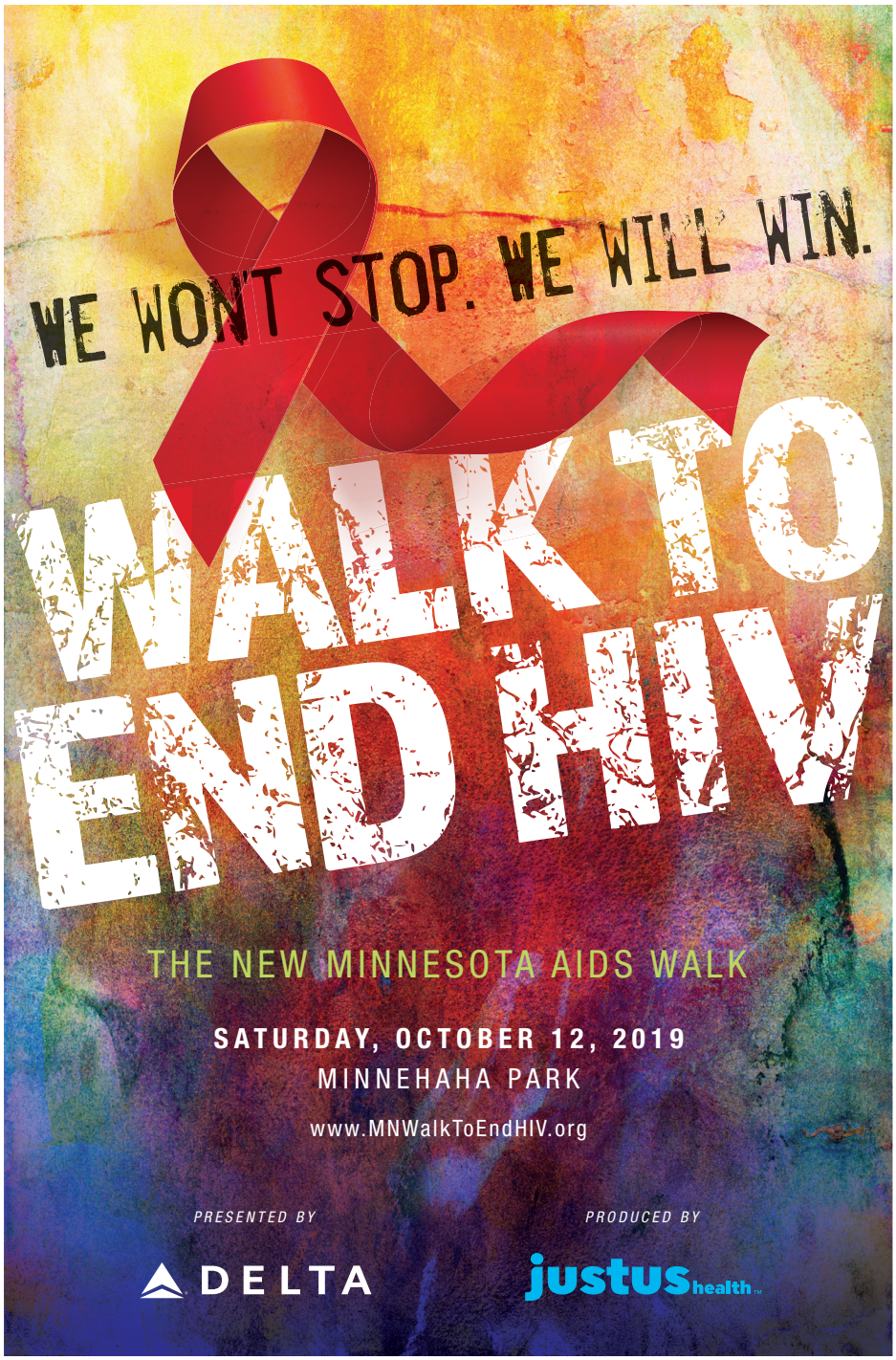
After sampling a huckleberry margarita or a local bourbon, we dine on kale salad, posole stew, venison osso buco and berry-mint Pavlova. The next morning, we wake to the operatic trilling of birds in time for huckleberry-peach pancakes and all the trimmings, prepared by our tent's butler (no, not Jeeves—a young lady with a sweet smile who orchestrates your choice of eggs). What's wrong with this picture? Not a darn thing.

Especially if you head out next on a trail ride. I'm seated on blonde-maned Marilyn, who huffs like a stevedore as we cross a bubbling stream. Following wrangler Jackie's instructions—an equine version of a driver's permit—I convince Marilyn to plod up paths among the towering Douglas fir and Ponderosa pines. She mercifully takes it easy along fields where the ranch's head of 500 Black Angus cattle (oh, and 80 bison) graze—for this is, indeed, a working ranch, no mere movie set. We'll spot wild elk and deer and maybe the wild mustangs who also call this stretch home. Riders of all abilities (or, like me, none) are also invited to participate in a three-hour cattle roundup, wrangling these 300-pounds beasts to where they need to be.

Or we can hike. I did plenty of that, on mile upon mile of private trails, either with a naturalist guide or solo. Ready to rest my feet and work my arms, I also sign on for gentle canoeing along the Blackhawk. If its waters look familiar, you must have seen the film *A River Runs Through It*, shot along her banks.

Continued on page 36





Other campers choose the more challenging kayak routes through the rapids. "Were they rough?" I ask. "Oh yeah!" bellowed the 30-something fella who loved every moment. So did his buddy, who'd spent his afternoon fly fishing: "You cannot believe how much fun that was!" Those even braver may sign on for rappelling. If that sounds like a death wish, hit the trails via electric bike instead. Whatever: After an active afternoon, you're entitled to enjoy a massage in the spa.

Midway through our stay, we moved into log "cabins"—not the term that I'd necessarily apply to these massive, three-bedroom homes: laundry room, kitchenette, rocking chairs on the front porch, and a pea-green Kia for your use parked at the door. Or simply phone for a van pick-up when you decide to head to dinner. We also toured a brand-new enclave called Green-O, slated to open in May 2020: 12 glass-walled, Frank Lloyd Wright-style houses clustered in the midst of a forest—each a romantic retreat for two (no office mates, no in-laws).

Oh, you want more sports? Just add water. Hop into one of those cute little Kias, or phone for the resort's van, to head 15 minutes down the road to Island Lodge on Salmon Lake, bordering a pristine State Forest, with the Mission Mountains rising in the distance. Swim, jet ski, wake board, whatever: Go for it.

Sundown means time for dinner: At cowboy-formal Pomp, the kitchen's treats tonight lead off with venison tartare and smoked cauliflower bisque. Dine ultra-locally on steelhead trout, beef or bison steak. Less formal (and a whole lot of fun) are the resort's chuck wagon dinners, staged beside the galloping Blackwater. As you sip yet-another huckleberry margarita, try your luck at ax-throwing; suck in tips on lassoing techniques; get cozy with a branding iron; or simply sit back and soak in the ballads of the local Cowboy Poet. After feasting on barbecue (beefsteak, ribs, chicken) and the classic trimmings (corn on the cob, beans, coleslaw, baked potatoes), gather close to the campsite to gain the expertise of the S'Mores sommelier (really!). Breakfast, if you can savor another bite after that evening's feast, involves salmon benedicts, chicken and biscuits, steak and eggs—or pancakes doused in the sweet syrup of you-know-what.

Summertime, the minimum stay is four days; winter, when indoor rodeos are a star attraction, it's two (but just try to tear yourself away within those limits, I dare you). Many activities are part of the all-inclusive price, while others are add-on options. a variety of themed weekends are on offer, too: culinary, photography, music, and more. Listen to your Inner Wrangler, then visit www.pawsup.com for further info. ∎

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COMMUNITY | BY KASSIDY TARALA

Building Up Bi+

The Bisexual Organizing Project is celebrating 20 years of uniting, supporting, and building up the bi+ community.

On the surface, the GLBT community is welcoming and inclusive for everybody, and while this is something the community is always striving for, certain subgroups within the community get lost in a world where identity is seemingly everything. For bisexual, pansexual, fluid, queer, and unlabeled (bi+) individuals, how do you walk into a gay bar while maintaining your bi+ identity? Or how do you publicly appear to be in a heterosexual relationship while still asserting that you're not straight, and you're proud of it?

For bi+ people, it can be difficult to "fit" a mold that only contains a portion of their identity. Because bi+ people face more obstacles surrounding invisibility, the Bisexual Organizing Project (BOP) has provided unity, support, and empowerment to the community for 20 years.

BOP started in the late 1990s when organizers of BECAUSE ("Bi+ Empowerment Conference: A Uniting, Supportive Experience"), the annual conference of the BOP, wanted to provide year-round programming for the bi+ community. BOP was incorporated as a Minnesota nonprofit in 1999.

"BOP's mission is to 'build, serve and advocate for an empowered bisexual, pansexual, fluid, queer, and unlabeled (bi+) community to promote social justice.' We do this by working through the framework constructed by our core values; support, advocacy, and social justice," say Sally Corbett, administrative assistant of BOP.

Bi-erasure and bi-invisibility are the tendency to ignore, overlook, dismiss, remove, falsify, or reexplain evidence of bisexuality in history, academia, the news media, and other primary sources. This sense of invisibility is something that BOP continues to fight every day.

"Bi+ individuals definitely face more obstacles surrounding visibility. Our community experiences phenomenons known as biphobia, bi-invisibility, and bi-erasure. These distinguish our experiences with visibility from those of gay and lesbian folks. Biphobia is discrimination, negative attitudes, behaviors, and structures directed towards bisexuality and bi+ identified individuals," Corbett says.

Because bi-erasure and bi-invisibility are so prevalent for bi+ folks, BOP strives to provide safe and welcoming spaces for bi+ people to gather, work, and just be themselves.

"Creating spaces where bi+ folks can come together in community is critical to upholding our mission. Sustainable access to community is fundamental for the mental, emotional, physical, and social well-being of bi+ individuals. We primarily support this simply by hosting events and spaces where bi+ folks can meet each other, spend time in community with one another, and find support from those who share similar experiences surrounding our sexual orientations," says Corbett. "We also provide educational workshops and presentations to LGBTQ+ ally organizations and communities, and participate in research initiatives about the bi+ community when we are able."

BOP's recurring social events happen monthly, such as their discussion group, book club, board game nights, and hiking/walking meetups. They also have a variety of one-off events as often as possible, including meeting for happy hour, going rollerskating, picnics, movie nights, pizza parties, and knitting circles or craft nights. They also host the BECAUSE conference annually. The conference was founded in 1992 by a handful of bi+ activists and has grown into the largest conference centered around non-monosexual identities in the United States.

Image courtesy of Bisexual Organizing Project

"BECAUSE is first and foremost a community conference, rather than an academic or professional conference. BECAUSE strives to be welcoming and inclusive, and embraces the many intersectionalities of the bi+ community and encourages people of all backgrounds and experiences to join us for an eventful weekend full of networking, community building, education, and organizing to create a more welcoming, inclusive, and equitable LGBTQIA community. We offer free and pay-what-you-can registration options, provide meals throughout the entire conference weekend, and survey registrants for accessibility needs," Corbett says.

Continued on page 42

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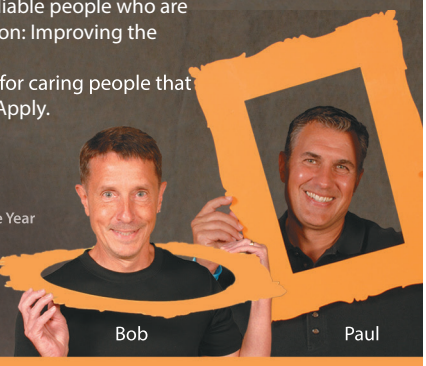

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The Bisexual Organizing Project is celebrating their 20th anniversary this year. Photo by Leah Yoemans

BECAUSE 2019 is happening Friday, Oct. 11 through Sunday, Oct. 13 at The Wellstone Center in St. Paul. It will offer a variety of workshops, entertainment, social events, and community building activities all weekend long. You can find the latest updates on BECAUSE 2019 and register at www.becauseconference.org.

If you're interested in becoming a BOP member, Corbett says BOP membership is rather informal.

"We have a form on our website for those who want to sign up. Membership is free, but we do offer sustaining memberships starting at as little as ten dollars a month," they say. "Sustaining memberships are what allow BOP to provide programs and resources for our community, and keep our events free or low-cost for attendees. You don't need to be an 'official' member to attend or participate in any of our events."

To become a BOP member, visit www.bisexualorganizingproject.org/membership.html. ∎

THE NETWORK

TAX SERVICES

ADVERTISER INDEX

Adult
Duluth Sauna.....29
Arts & Entertainment
MN Orchestra 17
Pray The Gay Away... 15
Automotive
Swedish Motors.....7
Bars & Nightlife
Gay 90's 18
The Happy Gnome.....13
Dry Cleaners
St. Croix Cleaners.....33
Events
Lavender Community Awards Lavender's First Thursdays.....43
Funeral Services
Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels & Cremation 39
Gifts
Brushy Creek Gifts.....27
Government
MN Assist. Council for Veterans.....37
Grocery Stores
Seward Co-op Grocery & Deli..... 13
Health & Wellness
Allina Health 5
Farrell's Extreme Bodyshaping 23
JustUs Health..... 35
Mill District Dental 6
Mint Orthodontics..... 13
NAMI Minnesota 28
Pride Institute 8
REM Minnesota 21
Right at Home 39
UCare 16
Home Services
Garlock French Roofing 8
Stafford Home Service.. 7
House Lift Remodeler..... 6
McQuillan Plumbing, Heating and Cooling 5
Otogawa-Anschel Design + Build..... 2
Standard Heating & Air Conditioning..... 25
Insurance
Dawn Bartell 6
Jewelry
Jewelry by Johan.....21
Max's..... 19
Media & Communications
Radio K.....7
Military Minnesota National Guard.....5
Organizations
James Ballentine Uptown
VFW Post #246..... 19
Pet Products & Services
Downtown Dogs..... 7
International Wolf Center 33
Real Estate & Rentals
Amy Ruzick, Kay Johnson–NoPlaceLikeHome Team 7
Parade of Homes.....44
Scott Belcher 39
Restaurants
Cajun Boiling..... 19
Co-op Creamery Cafe 13
French Meadow Bakery & Café 16
Wilde Cafe & Spirits ...13
Sports & Recreation
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources..... 9
Minnesota Twins.....37
Minnesota United FC . 25
Travel & Accommodations
Celebrity Cruises..... 3
Cook County Visitor Visitors Bureau 27
Jacque's-Inside
The Marquette Hotel .. 23
Madeline Island.....31
Sheraton Duluth Hotel.27
Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce 181.....31
The Marquette Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton.....23
Visit Duluth.....29
Windows on Minnesota.....23
Wedding Resources
St. James Hotel.....33

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